

NARRATOR: Koskella, Ted
INTERVIEWER: Troy Reeves
DATE: May 17, 2000
LOCATION: Boise, Idaho
PROJECT: Smokejumpers/Forest Fire Fighters

Tape Counter	Summary
000	Introduction.
010	Koskella gave Reeves a little family background and his school experience. Koskella began his fire-fighting career as a lookout. He explained (in detail) how lookouts fought fires in the late 1930s/early 1940s.
050	Koskella served in World War II as a Navy pilot. When he returned, he continued his education at Oregon State College. He returned to Idaho when he got a job with Payette National Forest.
075	Koskella explained the types of college courses he took to get his degree in forestry. Many of his classes included sections about dealing with fire in the forests.
100	Koskella's older brothers were involved in forestry, so he became interested in forestry before he took classes in college.
105	Koskella gave an overview of his early career in the Forest Service and his family life. He and his wife had five children, and his wife served as an unpaid volunteer for many years.
130	1949 was a big year for fire. Koskella described what jobs he did during that summer. Koskella moved several times during his Forest Service career; he mentioned some of the places he worked in his first years. He also talked about fighting fires with the help of helicopters and borate bombers.
175	Koskella told Reeves the specific locations and jobs he held throughout his career with the Forest Service. Along with his jobs, he worked with a fire crew; he would go with his crew to fight fire in the summer.
230	As a fire boss, Koskella helped to coordinate fire crews on big project fires. During the years, he also continued his education through Forest Service classes.

- 250 Koskella offered his opinions on current timber policies in the United States. Koskella also talked about building houses with timber, instead of aluminum or steel.
- 300 Koskella talked about the Forest Service's change in policy in the 1970s from the "10 a.m. Policy" to a different procedure; to fight specific fires, not to fight fires, or to prescribed burn certain sections of a forest.
- 360 In May 2000 a proscribed burn near Los Alamos, New Mexico, jumped the fire line and caused major damage to the town. Koskella offered his opinions on why and how that burn went wrong.
- 395 Koskella talked about the Yellowstone National Park fires in the summer of 1988. He also mentioned fires the burned in the early twentieth century in Idaho and Montana and its effect on those areas today.
- 445 Besides 1949 Koskella did not recall another bad fire year. He also mentioned some specific fires in Idaho in the summer and fall of 1949.
- 460 **END OF SIDE ONE**
TAPE ONE SIDE TWO
- 015 Koskella is very proud of the work he did as a forester in the Forest Service. According to Koskella it takes many more people to run ranger districts today than in the past, mainly because of the amount of paperwork the modern Forest Service produces.
- 045 During Koskella's time, rangers worked in the field. Koskella gave his opinion about the consequences of having a large number of people working in one ranger district. Koskella's job changed over time, partly because of his move up the job ladder, and partly because of people's attitudes and policy changes regarding the Forest Service.
- 090 Koskella recalled a "typical" day fighting fire during the summer. He also described how the Forest Service gathered a fire crew during the 1930s and 1940s. He discusses the differences in fire crews then, and the specialized crews (or "Hot Shots") in the later decades of his career.
- 150 With the smokejumpers, trained crews, and the National Interagency Fire Center, according to Koskella, fire fighting changed dramatically. In the early days, the Forest Service was tough on people, because they needed the people to fight the fire. Koskella told a couple of stories about fighting fires during his first years with the Forest Service.
- 200 Koskella retired in 1976. He explained why he quit full-time work at that point. After retirement Koskella and his wife bought a farm in Nampa,

where he has raised mules on some of the land, and rented other portions of land to others. Koskella recalled a story about the relationship between a lead horse and the mules.

240 Koskella talked about a pack string, which was a person with a group of mules who would come in after a fire to pack out equipment. According to Koskella there are still pack strings today, but helicopters have taken over most of that work.

260 During the winter in his early years, Koskella worked with timber sales. He described what he did to get the timber ready for sale. Koskella enjoyed his work; he felt dedicated to the forest. He also talked about the change in timber sales during his career and the consequences of that change.

360 The Forest Service has come under attack from various groups of people, including lumber people, environmentalists, and state rights people. Koskella furnished his opinions about how and why these attacks occur.

405 Koskella described his friendships and where they arose. In the early years, when Koskella and his family moved into a community, they became a part of that community. He and his wife belonged to local organizations in the area they lived.

440 Koskella's wife, in the early years, worked hard for the ranger district, even though she never received pay. Koskella talked about this fact, and how his wife excelled at doing this work along with raising the family.

480 **END OF SIDE TWO**
END OF INTERVIEW

NAMES AND PLACES INDEX

Albuquerque, New Mexico
Big Creek (Idaho forest district)
Boise Junior College
Brown Tie & Lumber Company
Cache National Forest (Utah)
Chamberlain (Idaho forest district)
Donnelly, Idaho
Gila Fire (New Mexico)
Hells Canyon fire (1949)
Lake Tahoe, California
Long Valley (Idaho)
Nampa, Idaho
National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC)
New Meadows, Idaho (forest district)
Odgen, Utah
Oregon State College
Payette National Forest
Pinedale, Wyoming
San Francisco, California
Southfork fire (1949)
Wasatch National Forest (Utah)
Washington, D.C.
Zina (?) Creek fire (1949)